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ABSTRACT

To satisfy the requirements of the British national curriculum and to provide greater emphasis on the teaching of mathematics, science, and technology, city technical colleges (CTCs) have adopted a longer working week and, in several cases, a longer school year. This document examines outcomes of the longer school day and the five-term year, 4 years after implementation. Data were derived from an informal survey of principals, teachers, and students in participating CTCs. Following the summary, the introduction compares class hours per week and the number of school days per year among the EEC countries. Findings indicate that the new schedules have resulted in enriched curricula, increased teacher workload, holiday scheduling conflicts, and high attendance rates. Students reported that they liked the five-term year and extended school day because the curriculum was exciting; however, teacher reactions were mixed. One figure and two tables are included. Appendices contain information on the length of school days in the CTCs, the four-term school year, curriculum modules, past attempts to change the school day, enrichment activities at two CTCs, and student electives. (LMI)

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The longer school day and five term year in CTCs: some initial observations

Julia Hagedorn

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The longer school day and five term year in CTCs: some initial observations

Julia Hagedorn

Number 5 in a series of CTC Trust publications
General Editor Dr Helen Sharp

The author

Julia Hagedorn is a freelance journalist who has specialized in education for 17 years.

She is a member of the Education Correspondents' Group, and has been a regular contributor to *The Guardian*, *The Times Educational Supplement*, *The Observer* and *The Independent*.

This series of publications is intended to disseminate within the educational arena in this country and abroad, the information, expertise and experience emerging from CTCs. CTCs are independent colleges; within national guidelines each is free to develop the CTC initiative in its own way. The CTC Trust respects this independence and wishes to state that its publications do not necessarily reflect the policy or practice of the movement as a whole.

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Preface

The 1988 Education Reform Act established a national secondary curriculum consisting of the three core subjects of English, mathematics and science and seven foundation subjects of technology, a modern language, history, geography, art, music and physical education. In addition, the legal obligation to teach religious education first established by the 1944 Education Act remains. Attainment in these subjects will be monitored by tests administered at the ages of 7, 11, 14 and 16.

Some schools have complained that there will be insufficient teaching hours available after satisfying the requirements of the National Curriculum to offer other courses such as Latin and Greek, additional modern languages and separate science subjects.

The difficulty of finding the hours to accommodate the National Curriculum as well as to teach other courses is aggravated by the gradual decline in student class hours per week which has occurred in maintained schools since 1945. Until the 1970s, the typical school pupil arrived at school at 8.30am and left at 4.30pm with 15 minutes break in the morning and a 45 minute lunch period. All the rest of the 35 hours a week was spent in class, apart from one afternoon devoted to sports and a daily assembly of 15 minutes. Moreover, students were encouraged to remain at school to participate after 4.30pm in a variety of school societies and sports, and many pupils took part in school team sports on Saturday mornings.

For various reasons (including union pressures and extra administrative work laid on teachers), all this has been whittled down to as few as 21 hours per week in the worst cases with many schools requiring their pupils to spend only 23 hours a week in class.

Lesson time per week in secondary schools in England and Wales

up to 21 hours	1%
22 hours	3%
23 hours	47%
24 hours	19%
25 hours	24%
26 hours or more	6%

Source: *DES Secondary Schools Staffing Survey of 394 schools, 1988*

No legal requirements exist on the hours of lessons that must be given every week, although all schools are required by statute to meet for not less than 380 half sessions a year. This allows 70 days of school holidays a year excluding weekends. However, in 1990 John McGregor issued a circular recommending that a minimum of 24 hours a week be taught in secondary schools.

As Richard Lynn[1] points out, many industrious Japanese secondary school pupils spend more hours in class per day (typically seven against five in England and Wales), and attend school for more days in the year (typically 240 days against 190 in England and Wales). School vacations are shorter in Japan and pupils attend school on Saturday mornings. In a school year, the Japanese child will have as many as 1500 hours of lessons compared to the 950 hours for an English or Welsh child. Some European schools have longer school days than their British counterparts.

In order to satisfy the requirements of the National Curriculum, and to provide greater emphasis on the teaching of mathematics, science and technology which their mission demands (40% of the timetable is devoted to these subjects between the ages of 11 and 14 and 50% between the ages of 14 and 16), CTCs have adopted a longer working week of approximately 31 hours per pupil. In addition, several CTCs employ a longer school year consisting of 200 days, divided into five terms of eight weeks each, compared to the state sector average of 190 days.

This paper by Julia Hagedorn draws some early lessons from this longer school day and year. While it is too early to make definitive judgements (the first CTC opened just four years ago) her conclusion is that the longer school day and year is proving popular with both pupils and parents and is supported by teachers. However, it is generally recognized that the longer timetable requires considerable dedication on the part of teachers. CTCs are now experimenting with ways to alleviate or reduce this burden.

It is also generally agreed that it would not be possible for CTCs to give greater emphasis to the teaching of mathematics, science and technology without employing a longer day and year.

Sir Cyril Taylor
Chairman, CTC Trust

[1] *Educational Achievement in Japan: Lessons for the West*, MacMillan and the Social Affairs Unit, 1988.

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I would like to thank the Principals and staff of Djanogly CTC, ADT College, BRIT Performing Arts and Technology School, Leigh CTC, Macmillan College and Dixons Bradford CTC for their time and co-operation.

Without their help, this paper could not have been written.

Julia Hagedorn

Glossary

The following abbreviations are used in this document:

BTEC	Business and Technology Education Council
CLEA	Council for Local Education Authorities
NCC	National Curriculum Council
NVQ	National Vocational Qualifications
RSA	Royal Society of Arts Examinations Board
SEAC	Schools Examinations and Assessment Council

Summary

Students and staff in CTCs have a longer school day and year than most state maintained schools in the UK. They are in class for 25 hours per week of formal lessons, plus at least six extra hours of enrichment activities, as compared to an average of 23.4 hours per week in the state sector. They are also open for 200 days a year rather than 190.

For CTCs, this means having a day which runs from about 8.30 in the morning to 4.30 in the afternoon, or later.

In order to allow for the extra demands which the longer day puts on staff and students, five CTCs also operate a five term year (eight week terms separated by three breaks of two weeks, and a four week summer holiday) instead of the normal three term year, which is found throughout Europe. Although the pros and cons of a four term year have been discussed widely, little attention has been paid to the five term structure. When Djanogly CTC in Nottingham initiated its five term year, this was therefore seen as a unique break with tradition.

Although it is too early to draw definitive conclusions from the use of the longer school day, it is possible to make some initial observations. This paper presents the findings of an informal survey of Principals', teachers' and students' views regarding the longer day and the five term year. The main points highlighted in the survey are given below.

Five term year

- Professional development can be accommodated more easily without taking teachers away from class, by using the two week breaks;
- Eight week blocks have curricular advantages; the five term year is an ideal structure for delivering a modular curriculum;
- The main disadvantage is the conflict with other schools' breaks, leading to problems with family holidays, for staff and students alike;

The longer school day

- The consensus amongst Principals is that the longer day allows CTCs to offer an improved curriculum;
- The optimum organization of lessons and breaks within the day is evolving; a major constraint is the early sunset in wintertime because children have to get home and parents are concerned about them walking home after dark;
- The length of lessons has to be chosen carefully to accommodate block timetabling and demands for longer or shorter sessions from different subjects;

Effect on teachers

- Job satisfaction is enormous despite the long hours; teachers in CTCs work well in excess of the 1,265 hours stipulated in the Teachers Pay and Conditions Act;
- Staff are typically enthusiastic about their jobs since they are involved in creating a new type of school. They show great commitment and a desire to do well;
- Teachers are divided on their reactions to the longer year. Some are too busy to notice being tired, while others say that they knew what they were taking on and therefore cannot complain;
- Performance related pay is in operation in some CTCs;

Effect on students

- Students like the eight week term;
- Students are happy with the longer school day;
- Students are so enthusiastic that it is common for teachers to have to 'kick them out' of the school late at night;
- The early start is advantageous for parents who can drop off their children for breakfast before going on to work;
- Having different holidays from friends and siblings is the biggest complaint from students, especially the younger ones;
- Employers find that CTC students on work placement are better able to cope with the working day.

Students like the five term year and are able to cope with the longer day because the curriculum is exciting. Pressure on teachers is quite high, especially in colleges where the longer day operates without the five term structure.

CTCs report high attendance rates – well over 95%; a survey conducted at one CTC indicated that 98% of parents are satisfied and supportive.

I. Introduction

In 1990, the then Secretary of State for Education, John McGregor issued a circular recommending that 12 to 16 year olds should receive a minimum of 24 hours of lessons per week. The majority of state maintained schools meet this minimum, teaching, on average, about 24 hours a week per pupil, within a day that runs broadly from 9am to 3.30pm.

Anecdotal evidence suggests, however, that the additional pressure on the timetable that has come recently from the introduction of the National Curriculum has led many schools to move towards 25 hours of contact time.

Table 1. *School hours and years in the EEC*

	Class hours per week	**Equivalent of school days per year**
Belgium	26.7	182
Denmark	18–25.5	200
Germany	21.75–24.75	187–207
Greece	17.25–23	175
Spain	25	170
Portugal	25	164
France	22–25.2	175
Ireland	28	180 (min)
Italy	30	200 (min)
Luxembourg	25	181
Netherlands	20–26.7	195
UK[a]	23.4 26.7 (Scotland)	190

Source: *Managing School Time* by Brian Knight, published by Longman (1989)

[a]Brian Knight suggests that the picture presented in the DES 1989 draft circular that schools offer anything between 25 to 22 hours of teaching a week is misleading in that it includes middle schools deemed secondary. He estimates that most schools offer 23 hours 20 minutes a week. However, he points out, there is much more variation if total contact time is measured including registration, assemblies and pastoral time and more still for total school time including breaks and circulation.

He points out that if schools increased the average day by 20 minutes as the DES circular suggested, they would provide little real increase in effective teaching time. 'The circular illustrates the weakness of making pragmatic adjustments to the school day without an underlying analysis', he says. 'If an extra hundred minutes a week is to be added effectively, more strategic change is needed.'

This is what CTCs were given the chance to do.

This is not very different from most EEC countries, although Italy provides 30 hours a week and Scotland has a higher total than England and Wales (see Table 1). It should be noted, though, that European schools do not provide the pastoral care, assemblies or registration arrangements that UK schools do on top of their teaching hours.

City Technology Colleges were given the opportunity to design a new blue print although within certain parameters, e.g. that they should have longer school days than maintained schools. CTCs generally open at 8am and continue until 5pm although there are variations within these times (see Appendix A). Pupils have 25 hours per week of formal lessons plus at least six extra hours of various activities. Assemblies, registration and administration take up another eight hours or so a week.

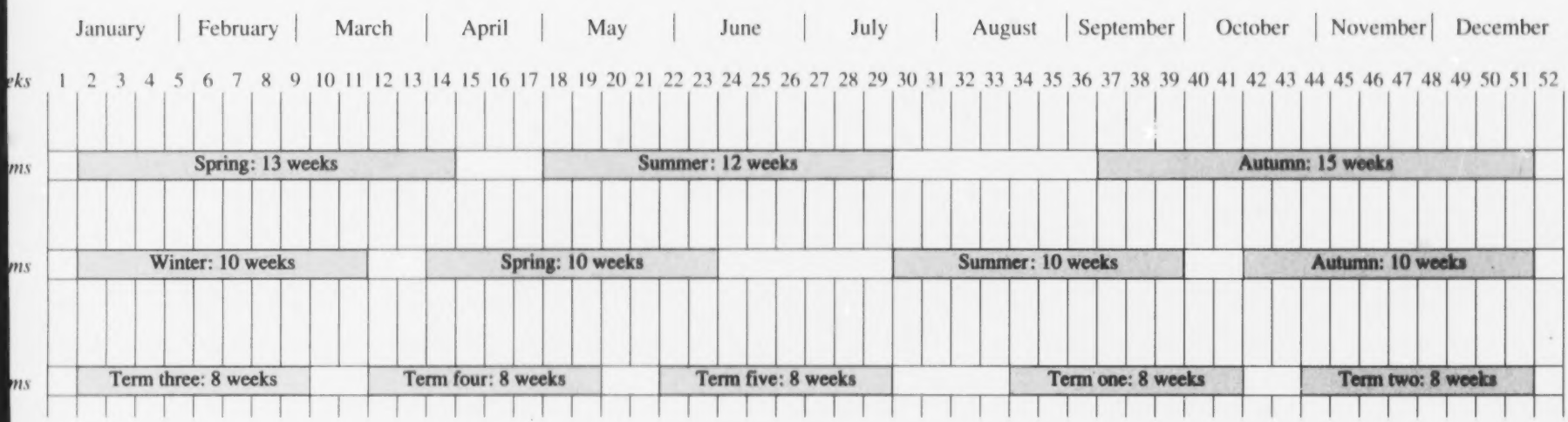
Some CTCs also operate for 200 days a year as against 190 in maintained schools. Without the extra time commitment, it would not be possible for CTCs to fulfill their promise of providing children with all the requirements of the National Curriculum, as well as giving a special emphasis to mathematics, science and technology, and enriching the timetable with a varied programme of extra-curricular activities as an integral part of the CTC programme for each student.

What we have to ask, however, is whether the advantages of this longer working year are of real benefit to the children. And do the hours worked well in excess of the 1,265 stipulated in the 1987 Teachers' Pay and Conditions Act lead to an unacceptable level of teacher fatigue?

II. The five term year

The three term year with a long summer holiday is found throughout Europe, with some regional variations. The pattern of the term is set by Christmas and Easter, with the date of the latter controlling the lengths of both the spring and summer terms.

ADT College, Dixons Bradford CTC, Djanogly CTC, Brooke College and the BRIT School offer instead five terms of eight weeks followed by breaks of two weeks. The summer holiday is of four weeks duration. Interestingly, no other institutions have looked at the advantages of five terms although the Council of Local Education Authorities (CLEA) set up a working party to look at changing the school year to four terms of ten weeks each. It came to the conclusion that it would be sensible for all maintained and grant-maintained schools to make the change at an agreed date, but the working party did not get majority support. Figure 1 shows how the three, four and five term years compare; more details are in Appendix B.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Autumn: 15 weeks
ms Winter: 10 weeks
Spring: 10 weeks
Summer: 10 weeks
Autumn: 10 weeks
ms Term three: 8 weeks
Term four: 8 weeks
Term five: 8 weeks
Term one: 8 weeks
Term two: 8 weeks

Figure 1. *Comparing the three, four and five term patterns*

When the Principal of Djanogly CTC in Nottingham, the first to adopt a five term year, began to plan for a longer school year, he decided on the five term structure for the following reasons:

- Eight week terms spread regularly throughout the year would minimize the pressure on staff and students with effective blocks of learning time set against usefully spaced rest periods of two weeks;
- The eight week term was an excellent vehicle for a modular curriculum;
- There would be no 'hanging on for grim death' which so many teachers experience at the end of an over-long summer term, especially after examinations have taken place;
- Every term would be fully effective because it would avoid the winding down process which too often happens at the end of the normal longer school term;
- A short summer break, while still allowing for family holidays, would pre-empt much of the mischief which arises from boredom amongst inner city 'latch-key kids' and would avoid the regressive effect of long summer holidays;
- Forty weeks lent itself easily to a year of 200 days.

Dixons Bradford CTC was the second to opt for the five term year. The Principal there had found that the typical three term year was unsatisfactory because the spring and summer terms were always of widely differing lengths. After looking at the four term model, he felt that ten week terms were too long and that by the summer the term was running throughout the main national holiday period.

He is happy with the eight week term and believes that it is the optimal length for the teaching and learning span. Two weeks holiday is better than a single half-term week which, in a long term, does not provide a sufficient break. It is the second week that enables the staff and students to really recharge their batteries.

The Chief Executive of ADT College in Wandsworth takes advantage of the eight week terms to build in regular assessment and evaluation. Children take home records of their achievement five times a year which, he says, keeps the CTC accountable to parents and provides children with motivation at regularly spaced intervals.

Professional development

CTCs have a commitment to staff professional development enshrined in their constitution. Each CTC provides between five and 10 days of professional development each year for all teachers in addition to the time spent on normal planning and meetings. The two week breaks mean that it is easier to do this without taking teachers away from their classes and it is possible to get staff together with minimal disruption.

ADT College, for example, initially scheduled the first weeks of the October, March and May two week breaks as professional development weeks. Staff were allowed to accrue a maximum of six days per year from twilight or weekend courses which could be substituted for the last two days of the three weeks set aside for professional development. Due to concerns about the extra demands on teachers, fewer days are now taken from the two week breaks for INSET, but some courses still run during this time. Fifteen days of professional training now take place in twilight sessions or at weekends.

Taking teachers out of the classroom for training was avoided initially because of the implications for students, but National Curriculum in-service training goes on during the term and since it is advantageous for teachers to mix with others, money is now being put into supply teachers for cover.

Djanogly CTC uses the first week of the autumn term break as an INSET week and distributes the rest around the year – two days with the whole college and three others as faculty based.

At Dixons Bradford CTC, five days are taken out of the existing term and, because many parents want to take a break at Easter, two days are slotted in at either side of Easter. Another two are taken at the beginning of the term in mid-August so that children have a slightly longer holiday and staff can get together before the beginning of the year; the last one is scheduled wherever time is available.

Curricular advantages

The eight week term has curricular advantages. The Director of Language and Communication at ADT College, points out that

> The eight week term is just right for reading a novel, or producing a good piece of writing that has been drafted, edited and word processed. It is generally at the end of this period that the energy level drops in most schools. The five term year has made me re-examine the delivery of the English curriculum. Each term has a particular focus – narrative, personal, descriptive, factual/discursive – and within these we develop listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. These foci are used across the college for cross-curricular and collaborative work.

At the BRIT Performing Arts and Technology School in Croydon, a wide range of academic and vocational qualifications – 'A' levels, City and Guilds, RSA, BTEC – are offered through an entirely modular curriculum. All students do a foundation course for which they can pick up the modules at any time of the year and which recognises their prior learning. For example, if someone is good at photography, they do not need to do the foundation aspect of technology but may choose an option that leads immediately to a higher qualification.

This modular approach allows the post-16 timetable to change every eight weeks and respond to students' needs without, as one of the Vice Principals

says, 'making it bitty'. He explains that the qualifications do not define the courses – rather the other way round. If someone is interested in media studies, for example, staff will point out which qualifications can be gained from a chosen set of modules. See Appendix C for a fuller explanation of how the modular structure works.

The Principal at Djanogly CTC believes that students need to be given targets that they can meet quickly and a clear feeling of where they are. Modular 'A' levels dovetail into BTEC units to give an effective convergance of the practical, the academic and the vocational without losing the rigour of 'A' level. He has plans for a single curriculum for the 14–18s where there are clear achievable targets backed up by NVQs.

The Principal at Dixons Bradford CTC also has a vision – of an institution open at all hours to youngsters and adults with a clear distinction between core students up to 16 and post-16 students. Not having a traditional year makes that much easier to achieve.

Family concerns

One major concern about the five term year was that it would create difficulties for families. Djanogly CTC found that this proved to be less of a problem than had been anticipated – seven of the 12 weeks of CTC breaks overlap the 14 weeks taken by the maintained sector.

The Principal at Dixons Bradford CTC reported that staff like the holiday pattern and the access it allows to off-peak holidays. One member of staff interviewed at ADT College is certainly happy with the different holidays, despite his wife being at work and his son at school during his October break. He said he enjoyed having the space to himself for once.

However, the majority of staff interviewed were of the opinion that the five term year is excellent for educational reasons but can be difficult personally. Many expressed the view that it would be great – if only all schools went over to it. Disadvantages pointed out were that other schools had their half-term just before the two week break so that neither break could be used to go away, child care was difficult to arrange if the children were on half-term holiday at different times, the four week summer break actually fell in the most expensive travel period, and parents were tempted to take their children on holiday when they should be in school, particularly ethnic minority families who were used to having the six week break to go back to their countries of origin.

Two other CTCs which have chosen to stay with a three term year have done so for reasons concerned with the family. The Principal of Macmillan College has chosen the three term year because that is what parents in the catchment area want. At Leigh CTC, the main disadvantage of opting for a five term

year is the problem that holidays do not match with those of siblings who attend other schools, although it is seen as an attractive format.

III. The longer school day

The 1988 Education Reform Act gave governors the power to decide the starting and finishing times of the school day. Attempts to change this in the past have generally foundered on the inflexibility of staff, parents or the local authority (see Appendix D).

CTCs are fortunate. Starting afresh, Principals have been able to determine not only the length of the day but its format. Organization of the day in many CTCs is indeed still evolving in the light of experience.

Organizing the day

CTCs organize the longer day in different ways. ADT College operates from 8.30am to 5pm every day. When it first opened, there were four morning sessions of 45 minutes each broken by a break of 20 minutes; lunch and enrichment of one hour and 40 minutes; followed by four afternoon sessions of 40 minutes. These sessions have now been changed into 30 minute periods (see Table 2) because it makes it easier to reflect curricular needs. Technology, for example, can have an hour and a half while languages are better in short, sharp 30 minute sessions. There are no bells, but there is a five minute changeover period which allows students to relax and chat.

There have been changes at Leigh CTC in Dartford also. In the first year, each day ran until 4.15pm, in 55 minute lessons, the idea being that staff meetings would start at 4.15pm. The college is on a split site, however, and this meant that staff could not arrive before 4.30pm. Children found the length and arrangement of sessions difficult, being split into three in the morning and three in the afternoon with a break after period two. Some complained of being faint with hunger by breaktime, and said that lunch was at an unacceptably early time; children were tired for the last lesson of the afternoon. Moreover, parents worried about them walking home in unlit streets on dark evenings. Many of the children at Leigh CTC walk home to the neighbouring council estate or depend on buses to take them home that often make long detours to drop everyone off.

So this year, the day has been changed to four periods in the morning and two in the afternoon, the afternoon break has been removed and lessons now finish at 4pm with optional activities until 5pm (see Table 3).

The day at Djanogly CTC has also been changed from ending at 4.30pm to 4.10pm because of the dark evenings. The 20 minutes lost has been absorbed by cutting the afternoon sessions from 45 minutes each to 40 minutes each.

Table 2. *Organization for the day at ADT College*

	August 1991		1992
7.30	Doors open for breakfast		
8.35–8.45	Registration		
8.45–9.30	Session 1	45 mins	Three 30 minute sessions, divided into 30, 60 or 90 minute lessons
9.30–10.15	Session 2	45 mins	
10.15–10.35	Break		
10.35–11.20	Session 3	45 mins	Three 30 minute sessions, divided into 30, 60 or 90 minute lessons
11.20–12.05	Session 4	45 mins	
12.05–1.45	Lunch and enrichment		
1.45–2.05	Registration/assembly		
2.05–2.45	Session 5	40 mins	Five 30 minute sessions, divided into 30, 60 or 90 minute lessons
2.45–3.25	Session 6	40 mins	
3.25–4.05	Session 7	40 mins	
4.05–4.45	Session 8	40 mins	
5.00	Close of day		

Table 3. *Organization of the day at Leigh CTC, revised September 1991*

8.00	Doors open for breakfast
8.30–8.50	Registration and assembly
8.50–9.45	Lesson 1
9.45–9.50	Changeover
9.50–10.45	Lesson 2
10.45–11.10	Break
11.10–12.05	Lesson 3
12.05–12.10	Changeover
12.10–1.05	Lesson 4
1.05–1.55	Lunch and clubs
1.55–2.05	Registration
2.05–3.00	Lesson 5
3.00–3.05	Changeover
3.05–4.00	Lesson 6
4.00–5.00	Clubs, after school activities, meetings

At the BRIT School, which takes students aged from 14 upwards, a continuous day with a flexible lunchtime is in operation. The teaching periods are of one hour duration and can be in one, two or three blocks, which gives BTEC classes, performing arts and professional afternoons three hour blocks.

Year 10 students at the BRIT School probably spend slightly less time on some traditional academic subjects but the Principal is reviewing this for next year. Students do humanities rather than separate history, geography and religious education. Costume technology and food will be added to technology for next year and will form part of their 12 hour performing arts and technology course.

Dixons Bradford CTC has changed its day, too. The core day now runs from 8.30am to 4pm with six hourly sessions and an hour in the middle of the day for lunch. There is a 15 minute break in the morning and an activity slot from 4–5pm. The Principal agrees that when operating on 45 minute slots the number of subjects covered can be greater but the change was necessitated by the need for two sittings at lunchtime as the college grew bigger.

Another reason for the change was the introduction of block timetabling. Science and technology wanted an hour and with 45 minute slots that meant giving them 90 minutes, but the problem with this was that other subjects would also have an hour and a half. With a longer block for lunch as well, the day would have had to start even earlier because, like many other CTCs, the college did not want to finish the core day later than 4pm because of the short winter days when pupils were having difficulty getting home.

The advantage of the new arrangements, with four hours before lunch and two after, is that English and French now have joint delivery of certain aspects of language. The two subjects are timetabled together. Half the year group have French while the other half have English, then they swap around. The exact details are left to the departments to arrange.

ADT College is also planning to use block timetables next year which will allow half the year group to be programmed for any one subject at a time. It will also be possible for students to be put in broad bands and organized into groups of different sizes.

Enrichment

The Principal at Dixons Bradford CTC points out that schools, since the introduction of the National Curriculum, have difficulty accommodating all the subjects.

> We can do that, and also educate for leisure. But the only way you can legitimately deliver is with longer class time. I greatly value the flexibility we have had to do these things.

He is talking about the enrichment activities which are seen by Principals as a vital and integral part of the CTCs' contribution to inner city children, providing breadth of experience, balance, compensatory programmes where necessary or extension for the gifted, and preparation for leisure and recreation. Enrichment activities include sports and hobbies as well as formal academic subjects such as computing and additional language instruction (see Appendix E for details of enrichment activities at two CTCs).

Macmillan College's choice of a variable ending to the day depending on the age of child is closely allied to the Principal's belief in the enrichment programme. In the first year, children do one supervised homework with their tutor and stay at least one other evening to take part in any one of 30 activities. The first period is an extension of the normal curriculum, the second one enrichment. In the second year, another evening is added for personal development. The personal development programme underpins the curriculum at Macmillan College and is concerned with delivering a social development programme to inner city clients. It can cover anything from the General Election to sex education, visits to steelworks and farms to entertaining visitors from industry for lunch.

By the third year, students are timetabled to have four longer days; by then there is an accelerated group for GCSE where, this year, 32 out of 185 are at present on course for early entry in 10 subjects.

This would seem to be a heavy programme but, as the Principal says, he is after good examination results and jobs for his students.

> It would be impossible to do the National Curriculum and everything we want to do if we didn't have the longer day. Whatever activities you run in an inner city school, you have to make up lots of ground. You have to design a curriculum which answers the questions as to why inner city schools don't get good results, why the children tear around the streets when others are playing instruments, and so on. The answer lies in where they come from so you design the programme to deliver the family experience which many others have at home and which sets them up to succeed. It must be individual and based on each student's needs.

At Djanogly CTC, enrichment activities are included in the one hour 40 minute lunchtime with half the school taking part at any one time. This works wonders for lunchtime discipline by having half the college in supervised activities (see Appendix E for a list of lunchtime activities). Rotating the activities over the five terms ensures that all children get the options they want. Next year, the pattern will be changed because the increase in student numbers will necessitate a more sophisticated system. The activities will not be flagged under enrichment but wrapped up in the curriculum like any other subject.

At ADT College, enrichment studies are known as New Horizons. Students choose from various categories covering a wide field (see Appendix E). Some children are targeted either for acceleration courses or for booster clubs.

This is a necessary and valid part of enrichment if the needs of students at both ends of the spectrum are to be met; like all CTCs, ADT College is committed to admitting students of a wide range of ability.

The Principal at Leigh CTC will target particular children next year, either for extension or for remedial work. She is concerned that removing the element of choice may negate the programme's *raison d'être*. It is often when the student is working by choice rather than by compulsion that the greatest progress is made.

At Leigh CTC, enrichment was originally embedded within the timetable as a double and a single period. However, it has now been decided to give one of the hours to the expressive arts and to timetable the other two hours in the afternoon so that every peer group gets one afternoon of enrichment with an extra hour after school. This makes it easier to fit in the sort of outside activities that need a flexible ending.

At ADT College, enrichment activities are timetabled at the end of the day so that the last hour is 'even more exciting' and students cannot wait to come back for more the next day. At least one hour's independent study will be included within the programme where students have access to teachers, computers and each other. Two other afternoons will include a wide range of activities from science, technology, sport, music, drama and so on. This frees the curriculum and, by having sport on one afternoon, it allows the school to make fixtures against other schools, something which is not possible when sport takes place only after the normal school day.

Enrichment is timetabled next to the extension hour at the end of the afternoon at the BRIT School, a decision with which the Principal is less happy. Some students see it as a waste of time, she says, although others use the time well. Next year, the time will be re-distributed, giving an extra hour to science, technology and IT and allowing the opportunity to opt for an additional qualification. The problem at BRIT is that they have such a rich curriculum and exciting opportunities that the enrichment programme seems unnecessary.

The general consensus is that the longer day enables CTCs to offer an improved entitlement curriculum. As the Principal of Djanogly CTC says:

> It takes away the need to lose something in order to continue. We don't have to fit into a box. We make the box fit us.

IV. The effect on teachers

Teachers are expected to work from 8.30am to 5pm, including taking part in enrichment activities, serving as personal tutors with responsibility for guiding and monitoring students' choice of enrichment and academic options, and supervising work experience; in addition, they are expected to liaise with parents, attend parents' meetings, and so on. Their working year, including professional development, is 42 weeks and they also have to prepare for an extra hour's teaching every day. The 1,265 hours stipulated in the Teachers' Pay and Conditions Act has little relevance to CTC teachers who typically work a much longer year.

The teachers are meant to have less contact time – 73% of their time, against the national average of 76%. In practise, their contact time appears to be much higher than this and Principals are concerned about the pressure this brings. However, CTC staff are now learning to pace themselves and set more realistic targets.

Principals' views

The very 'newness' of CTCs means that there are, as yet, no rigid systems in place. As the Principal of Leigh CTC says,

> We're about demonstrating change, about research and development. We evaluate constantly and if it's bad, change it. That can be stressful. We can't sit back and say we've got it right – there are always improvements to be made.

Enthusiasm keeps the teachers going, but it is an emotional drain, and the Principal of the BRIT School observes that many of her staff, who may keep going during the term, go down with migraines or flu at the beginning of the holidays. She is concerned that they may be working too hard, although she is pleased with the commitment they show.

Why do they do it? One Vice Principal suggests that it is the excitement of the curriculum and the CTC concept, and the fulfillment gained from creating opportunities for students. 'It is very proactive and the students are very demanding. They pick up new things quickly and staff accept the tiredness because it is fulfilling.'

There is, however, a concern for overburdening teachers. At ADT College, the situation is being monitored carefully, because in a new CTC there are fewer staff at first and each one plays a crucial role. Care must be taken to ensure that staff do not take on more than they can handle. This is why some of the professional development originally organized for the breaks is being changed.

The Principal at the BRIT School feels that a careful programme of professional development to identify the needs of the school, regarding

individual staff is needed. But she feels that she has to be careful about how much more time she takes from her teachers, so she does not insist on INSET in holiday times at the moment. Instead, there are two weekly after-school sessions, one weekly afternoon session, and four other days taken throughout the year.

No time is taken from the two week breaks at Dixons Bradford CTC. The Principal believes that as the pressures are greater than in other schools, the integrity and value of the two weeks holiday should be strictly protected. Staff teach 25-26 hours a week and have five or six hours of non-contact time which includes an hour when they are available for students.

CTC staff also attend many staff planning meetings. As part of the monitoring of staff stress, meetings have been streamlined considerably at ADT College. Not only are meetings run with a firm hand, but they do not normally last longer than an hour, and a full agenda is distributed beforehand.

At Leigh CTC, 8am breakfast is a regular meeting time for many staff. Departmental meetings are timetabled but there are curriculum developments, INSET or management meetings most days between 4pm and 5pm. On top of all this, as in most CTCs, staff are taking work home – two to three hours of marking and preparation. The Principal believes that there may be staff who do not stay in CTCs for long; certainly teachers who have worked in CTCs are seen as an attractive proposition for other schools because of their knowledge of IT and rigorous professional development.

Teachers' views

Teachers are divided in their attitude. The Director of Language and Communication at ADT College says yes, she does get tired and yes, she would like more free time, but the job is challenging and stimulating and therefore worthwhile. There is a great deal to do, which is inevitable as the college is still in its infancy.

Other staff say they knew what they were taking on before they were hired. They feel that there is no comparison with the state sector. Everyone puts in the hours and the job satisfaction is enormous.

The head of home economics and pastoral co-ordinator at Djanogly CTC finds late meetings difficult because she feels tired; three meetings a week are normal. She would like meetings to be timetabled but recognises the problem of getting people together. She says that she is flexible in the hours she demands from her department but others are less flexible, requiring jobs to be done at the school. 'We are stuck with the length of the day, but not with the actual structure', she points out. 'You have to really believe in it because it takes a long time to adjust.'

Staffing

In an attempt to relieve pressure on teachers at Djanogly CTC, they are not called on to provide cover for absent colleagues. Provision for a full-time supply teacher budget has meant that there are three permanent floaters on the staff of 43.

Revenue funding is based on that for a state maintained school in a similar area and there is therefore no money for extra staff.

At ADT College, money is raised to generate an extra member of staff through letting out the premises. Local authorities have also been asked to 'statement' some of the students, i.e. to provide a statement of any special needs which the child requires. By collecting together the extra help which such children are given, it has been possible to appoint two extra members of staff. A trading company has also been established which in its first three months of operation produced an income of approximately £52,000. The company provides a range of management and consultancy services throughout the public and educational sectors.

The Principal at Dixon's Bradford CTC is loth to pay permanent supply teachers' salaries from money raised by other means in case the money is not there next year. But, he says,

> A very powerful case can be made out to warrant additional pay for the extra hours they work, but we must pay our teachers from our budget.

Leigh CTC is beginning to look at performance related pay to 'reward' teachers although that would bring its own problems since not all teachers would necessarily be better off. At ADT College staff are already on performance related pay and negotiate salaries individually when they arrive. What they would earn elsewhere, and London weighting are both taken into account.

At Djanogly CTC, the teacher contract is under review because of concerns that the package of conditions and salary is not adequate. Teachers do 12% more time than in the state sector but are not being offered 12% more salary. Staff at Leigh CTC were originally asked to do an extra five days of community work on top of the 10 days INSET, but this was subsequently dropped.

The effect on students

Children are by nature resilient and seem to have adapted more quickly than staff to the longer day. Although children in the catchment area for Dixons Bradford CTC have to make long bus journeys into the centre of the city and then out to their homes, large numbers arrive early and stay until 5pm. They

stay on to be in the library, to do information technology and design and technology.

Comments often heard from teachers were:

> They keep coming back for more;
>
> Children want to come – they like working with our teachers;
>
> It's snowballing – students are there working on computers, in the business studies section doing work, it's still a marvel. I can't believe it. Its exciting and unusual;
>
> It is the motivation of the students. They have more energy. It bounces off me.

And from a parent:

> It's a lot to do with attitude to school. The day is only long when you don't enjoy it.

This is corroborated by a small survey of pupil attitude carried out at Leigh CTC. The older students, who had been in the school that Leigh took over, mentioned the longer day but without complaining; not one of the younger ones minded.

CTCs are committed to delivering a curriculum that is innovative and relevant. It has been shown in maintained schools that when the curriculum is made more exciting the motivation of the pupils increases (see Appendix F).

At the BRIT School, for example, the Vice Principal is working with staff constantly to find ways of getting over theoretical ideas in practical ways. He believes that he is not teaching properly if 'A' level is taught with an academic approach only; subjects should be enlivened, whether in the context of BTEC modules or 'A' levels. So he personally runs sessions on sound recording totally in German, for example, and an introduction to science course takes forensic science as its base.

The students are happy with this approach. At an ordinary school, they say, you are behind a desk all the time. Here, at CTCs, instruction is practical and time flies.

Children at Leigh and Djanogly CTCs were enthusiastic about the range of options, clubs and activities open to them. They believe there is a chance to catch up for those who were not too good at a subject and that lunchtimes are no longer times of tedium at best and being bullied at worst. One Year 9 student at Leigh CTC added 'Here, work is so much fun you remember it. Before no-one bothered if you did it or not'.

This feeling of security is doubtless helped by the pastoral tutorial system that CTCs have adopted. It provides a 'safer' environment for the students when their first port of call is a tutor whom they see twice a day. This is vital and helps with truancy; it is especially important when there is often no consistency at home – students need a familiar face at school.

The early start is seen as extremely advantageous by working parents who can drop their child off at the CTC for breakfast. This helps with punctuality, and the children appear to enjoy getting together for a hot drink and toast at the beginning of the day. The greater difficulty is experienced by those who have to take the school bus which has an extended round trip. ADT College is planning to warn prospective students to take the school journey into account before they commit themselves.

The different holidays are seen as more of a problem. Children lament not being able to see their friends and the younger ones find it especially difficult. Students in the first year at ADT College get a chance to acclimatise: their starting date is moved from August to September which also gives their teachers an induction week before the new pupils come in. It is also a problem when siblings don't attend the same school – leading in one case that may be typical of many to the mother taking an Easter holiday with the sons while dad and daughter come back to work and school.

Against this disadvantage has to be set the eight week term which pupils like. 'If you are doing a module in history or geography you can finish it off. If you have 13 weeks you can't split it and you get bored.' Homework does not seem to bother the students. They say they learn to pace themselves, and a parent at Leigh CTC points out that by secondary school age children are not going to bed until at least nine anyway, and that leaves plenty of time to get home and do homework.

Employers have remarked that children on work placements from CTCs are better prepared for the world of work. Pupils from other schools begin to flag at 3.30pm.

Conclusions

The longer school day appears to pose no problems for the students, and they find the richer curriculum exciting. For teachers, it results in a long day and the extra demands on teachers are quite high. Fatigue is particularly a problem for those who do not enjoy the two week breaks between terms.

The five term year is ideal for the curriculum; staff and students agree on this. The eight week blocks are the right length for delivering a course module. For students, the breaks provide time for resting and recharging,

but teachers who attend professional development courses during the breaks find that they are often tired when they return to school.

The one objection to the five term year appears to be the fact that holidays do not always coincide with those of parents, friends and siblings who attend other schools. If all schools moved to the five term year, this objection would disappear.

Attendance rates at CTCs are high – 96% at Djanogly CTC and 94.5% at Macmillan College are typical percentages. Macmillan staff believe that they have made positive and definite progress over the three years they have been open and surveys indicate that 98% of parents are satisfied.

> The effort required of the CTC curriculum is great. But if it leads to large numbers of inner city children from largely deprived areas being educated effectively, given an enquiring nature and achieving academic success, then the effort will have been worth every penny spent on it and every hour of staff development time connected with it.

Appendix A: Length of the school day in CTCs

ADT College, Wandsworth	8.30am – 5.00pm
Bacon's College, Rotherhithe	8.40am – 3.20pm Mon, Wed & Fri 8.40am – 4.20pm Tue, Thur
BRIT Performing Arts & Technology School, Croydon	8.30am – 5.00pm Mon & Wed 8.30am – 4.00pm Tue & Thur 8.30am – 1.00pm Fri Extension work and extra sessions continue until late Mon – Fri.
Brooke College, Corby	8.30am – 4.00pm
Dixons Bradford CTC	8.30am – 4.00pm College open until 5.00pm for private study
Djanogly CTC, Nottingham	8.45am – 4.05pm (4.45pm for post-16) College open until 9.30pm daily
Emmanuel College, Gateshead	8.30am – 3.50pm
Haberdashers' Aske's Hatcham Schools	8.30am – 3.15pm Mon & Fri (no enrichment) 8.30am – 4.30pm Tue, Wed & Thur (with enrichment, mandatory for Year 7) These times are under review
Harris CTC, Croydon	8.30am – 3.15pm Mon & Fri (no enrichment) 8.30am – 4.30pm Tue, Wed & Thur (with enrichment)
John Cabot CTC, Bristol (opening September 1993)	8.30am – 5.00pm
Kingshurst CTC, Solihull	8.20am – 4.00pm Mon &Tue 8.20am – 4.30pm Wed & Thur 8.20am – 3.00pm Fri College opens one hour earlier and closes one hour later for personal study
Landau-Forte College, Derby (opening September 1992)	8.30am – 3.45pm Mon & Fri 8.30am – 4.00pm Tue, Wed, Thur 8.30am – 5.00pm Mon – Fri for post-16
Leigh CTC, Dartford	8.30am – 4.00pm
Macmillan College, Middlesbrough	6 day cyclic timetable days 1– 6 8.30am – 3.45pm end of normal lessons Every afternoon except day 2 there are extension activities until 4.45pm Extension activities are compulsory on 2 days for Yrs 7, 8 & 9 and on 4 days thereafter
Thomas Telford School, Telford	8.30am – 4.00pm Mon – Fri, giving 30 hours of compulsory lessons; 15 hours of optional flexi-study is offered: 7.30am – 8.30am and 4.00pm – 5.00pm

Appendix B: The four term year

A working party was appointed by the Council for Local Education Authorities (CLEA) to look into changing the school year in the light of the 1986 Education Act. The paper concluded that a change in the pattern of the school year from three to four terms would be likely to be of benefit educationally.

It pointed out that the present system produces three terms of very different lengths and that the effect of variation was compounded by the fact that the small but significant differences in dates of terms between LEAs with a common boundary had a disproportionately disruptive effect on families with children at school in both authorities.

The pattern that it recommended for adoption is shown below:

Winter Term	From second week in January to third week in March
Spring Term	From beginning of April to end of first week in May
Summer term	From third week in July to end of September
Autumn term	From third week in October to end of third week in December
Breaks	Last week of December and first of January
	Last two weeks of April
	Six weeks in June and July
	Two weeks at beginning of October

This compares with the five term year for ADT College 1992–93 as below:

Term one	17th August to 9th October
Term two	26th October to 18th December
Term three	4th January to 26th February
Term four	15th March to 7th May
Term five	24th May to 16th July
Breaks	Two weeks in the middle of October
	Two weeks at Christmas
	Two weeks at the beginning of March
	Two weeks in the middle of May
	Four weeks in July/August

The four term year pattern assumed that 10 days would be taken over the year for half-term holidays and that these could be subject to local variation. The exam season would need to be brought forward some three to four weeks. The summer holiday would start some six weeks earlier in the year.

This paper then went out for further consultation to LEAs, teacher unions, parent organizations, trade unions, tourist boards, SEAC, the NCC, further and higher education bodies, employer bodies, and so on in a wide ranging consultation. The results of this consultation were reported back to CLEA in January. There was no consensus for change: about 20% were in favour, 20% against, and the rest neutral.

Nevertheless, an initiative came from the Association of Metropolitan Authorities' education committee that further investigation should be carried out. This was to look not only into the four term year but at dates for a fixed three term year, at the five term year, at a two semester year, and at a fixed secular Easter holiday.

In fact, many of the objections made to the four term year – attachment to the July/August vacation, extra stress on teachers and children because of ten week terms, the timing of examinations – are met by adopting the five term instead of the four term model.

Appendix C: Examples of module information at the BRIT School

Students are given detailed information on the modules available next term in week six of the current term. They make their choices in week eight and their timetable is available by the end of the week. In every two year course, each module is available three times. The school runs a full timetable for post-16 students which is very unusual.

The Vice Principal profits from an overlap between qualifications in the examining boards. He says that as much as 25% of an 'A' level can be gained through other qualifications and chooses 19 examination boards that accept this approach. Students then do one piece of work that could count, for example, for part of an 'A' level or a BTEC award.

The modular approach allows students to arrange their timetable to encompass any mixture of qualifications.

The following two module descriptions give an example of the information sheets which students use to choose their courses:

Qualification Code: Cs **Term**: Spring 1992 **Time slot:** N
Module title: Elementary Spanish
Content: A chance to expand knowledge of the Spanish language and culture. Students will be encouraged to use their language in context (radio, television, stage design, etc).
Qualifications link:
Pre-requisite: None
Staff responsible: GS **Teaching:**ED

Qualification Code: Ee **Term**: Spring 1992 **Time slot:** E
Module title: Entertainment Industry Admin
Content: A study of the entertainment industry. Designed for students interested in working in the industry, it can lead to a qualification if followed for three or eight terms.
Qualifications link: Ab
Pre-requisite: None
Staff responsible: AB **Teaching:**AB

Qualification codes are arranged in sections. Each code indicates by its first letter the base qualification. The second letter indicates the base qualification's module or subject. (A: 'A' level, C: City and Guilds, D: Design, E: Entertainment Industry Admin, F: Foundation, G: General, I: Interest, M: BTEC National in Media, N: National Curriculum, O: BTEC First Performing Arts, P: BTEC National Performing Arts.) For example, Ee represents the entertainment module of the Entertainment Industry Admin qualification, and Cj represents City and Guilds Media Techniques in Journalism and Radio (Level 3).

Appendix D: Past attempts to change the school day

In general, attempts in the maintained sector to change the school day have meant not extending it, but providing a compressed day by shortening the lunch break and finishing earlier.

Dorset set up a working party in 1981 to look at restructuring the day in all schools but dropped the proposal in the face of opposition from parents and others. Avon did likewise in 1987 with the same results. Coventry did a study of the school day in 1981 where it put forward a model of morning programmes for 11 to 13 year olds followed by afternoon and evening activities for 14 to 18 year olds, but the recommendations have never been followed. Oxfordshire circulated a paper to schools suggesting a long morning from 8.30am to 1.30pm followed by voluntary clubs and leisure activities in the afternoon, or a day with a short lunch break and compulsory afternoon activities very much like the CTC enrichment programme, but after a series of stormy public meetings, the proposals were dropped. For fuller examples see *Managing School Time* by Brian Knight, published by Longman (1989).

Appendix E: Enrichment activities

New Horizons Options at ADT College

Group A – Independent study

Sometimes in the library, sometimes classroom based.
Maths workshop; science workshop; weather satellites; history projects and models; computers in geograpy; atlas and maps workshop.

Group B – Science, business education, computers and technology

Maths games and puzzles; photography; science egg race; computer workshop; electronics project; astronomy; video techniques; video appreciation (also in Group C).

Group C – Mixed modules

Keyboards in action (music); keyboards for everyone (music); winning chess; mini presentation; drama (double module); community action; model making; Euro Mag (designing and producing); theatre make-up; musicals.

Group D – Recreation

Swimming; basketball; netball; soccer for girls; circuit training; cricket; sport for all; petenque; tennis for beginners; tennis; softball; sport for all; keep fit and running; running intermediate; table tennis; soccer team practice; golf.

Special workshops – selected students only

Fuzzbuzz workshop (reading, writing); handwriting workshop; spelling computers; spelling workshop; reading workshop.

Lunchtime activities at Djanogly CTC

Trampolining; drama; football; video stories; fantasy games; electronics; art; card design; table tennis; gym club; first aid; newspaper; guitar; badminton; obs drawing; design and make; design and build; IT; learning support; modelling; cultural studies; extension work in maths; science club; string group; windband; German for beginners; German gamil; French; netball club; choir; basketball; environment; chess; recorders; gardening; keep fit; map reading; origami; Russian; art; computers in science; percussion; language enrichment; cross stitchery.

Appendix F: Students' motivation

At the Archway School in Stroud, the Head introduced 'electives' in 1983. These are very like the CTC enrichment programme. Years 1 and 2 are given two sessions each lasting one and three quarter hours while Years 3 to 7 have three sessions. Two of the three sessions take up the entire afternoon and include a late finish.

Interestingly, the school's best examination results came during the scheme. It is still flourishing and the school is now over-subscribed. The Head puts this down to the electives programme which, she says, allows an element of choice to shape the curriculum.

It also allows her to offer GSCE choices like philosophy which would normally not attract sufficient numbers to justify a group. Electives are not age related and are also open to parents which allows her to put on such minority subjects.

The school also has a teaching timetable of 25 hours a week in addition to registration, and so on. Teachers, however, give of their time willingly and voluntarily.

Electives have also had a direct impact on the curriculum in that there has to be some horsetrading between subjects to ensure that the National Curriculum is covered so subjects like geography and history get together to plan their syllabuses.

Teachers have to be very efficient in their delivery and ensure that they adhere rigidly to their given percentage of the timetable.

There are similar programmes in other maintained comprehensive schools, of course. They appear to have the same impact on the curriculum, on teachers and on capturing students' interest as is seen in Stroud and has been witnessed in CTCs.

Previous titles in this series, available from the CTC Trust:

1. *Curriculum and resources: computer provision in a CTC* by Lawrence Denholm, ISBN 1 873882 00 9;

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